

April 11, 2016

Merck kicks off its “Merck Diabetes and Hypertension Awards” across African and Asian Universities as part of its Capacity Advancement Program

- **Merck announces the winner of Merck Diabetes Award for United Arab Emirates**
- **Merck Diabetes Award will be rolled out in 30 African and Asian universities with the aim to create diabetes experts platform across the continents**
- **Merck supports diabetes education and community awareness through its Merck Capacity Advancement Program**

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, April 11, 2016 – Merck, a leading science and technology company, today announced the start of the Merck Diabetes Award and Merck Hypertension Award across more than 30 African and Asian universities with the aim to build a platform of diabetes and hypertension experts across the globe.

In February 2015, Merck in partnership with Dubai Medical University invited all medical students to apply for “**Merck Diabetes Award**” 2016 with the theme of “**Every Day is a Diabetes Day**”.

Today Merck also announced the winner who received the award in a ceremony attended by Merck Health Care CEO, the Dean of Dubai Medical University, President of International Diabetes Federation (IDF) Africa, Vice President of Pan African Cardiology Society and the Director of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) of Indonesia Ministry of Health.

The students across African and Asian medical universities will be asked to submit a concept paper on how to improve awareness about diabetes early detection and prevention in their countries and to encourage their society, scientific community, local authorities,



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media and relevant stakeholders to think and act on Diabetes Every Day. The winner from each university will be provided with an opportunity to study for a one year postgraduate diabetes diploma.

Merck also kicked off its **Hypertension Award** for the same university with theme **“What the Healthy Heart needs”**. The winner of this award will be provided with a one year postgraduate course on preventive cardiovascular medicines in South Wales University in the United Kingdom.

“Merck plays an important role in building healthcare capacity in Africa addressing NCDs focusing on rural areas, medical students and local partnership with academia, ministries of health, policy makers and governments,” Belen Garijo, CEO of Merck Healthcare and Member of the Executive Board of Merck emphasized.

Dr. Dima Abdelmannan, Dean of Clinical Medicine, Dubai Medical University and Consultant Endocrinologist, Dubai Diabetes Center, DHA emphasized: “In recent years we have seen a rapid rise in type 2 diabetes across all age groups. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is ranked 16th worldwide, with 19.2% of the population living with diabetes. These statistics indicate that the region has high risk factors for diabetes, mostly related to rising obesity rates and physical inactivity. Therefore, there is an urgent need to develop accredited teaching programs and encourage people and relevant stakeholders to think and act on diabetes every day. I am sure **Merck Diabetes Award** will encourage our medical students to be creative in developing new strategies, policies and programs to encourage community members to think about diabetes every day”.

“We are excited about the medical students’ application for Merck Diabetes Awards, most of their ideas were very innovative and can make a change in the diabetes landscape in UAE,” she added.

The Scientific Committee selected two applicants to receive the award. The first winner was Nujood Al Shirawi, a graduate of Dubai Medical University and currently an intern house officer under Dubai Health Authority (DHA). The second winner was granted to an application submitted by two medical students in their 4th year at Dubai Medical University, Sana Laraib Daud and Zoubia Fathima.

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Dr. Ahmed Reja, the President of IDF Africa and President of Ethiopia Diabetes Association and Chief of Endocrinology at Black Lion Hospital emphasized: “We are very happy to partner with Merck to drive their strategy to build diabetes capacity and roll out the Merck Diabetes Award across the continent. The outcome in UAE was remarkable, it encouraged the students to be more innovative and take a leadership position to fight diabetes in their own country.”

“I am confident that the students across the African continent will equally be enthusiastic to participate with their ideas and concepts to improve the access to diabetes healthcare solutions in their own countries,” he added.

Prof. Eligah Ogola, Vice President of Pan African Cardiology Society said during the event: “We are happy to partner with Merck to implement their Capacity Advancement Program focusing on hypertension in 2016. This combined diabetes and hypertension education program will contribute towards providing guidelines and clinical practice for prevention, diagnosis and management of these diseases and their complications. The objective of this initiative is to increase the level of knowledge for medical students who will work in the near future with patients to help them prevent, understand and control the diseases across the continent”.

Merck Diabetes and Hypertension Awards mark another step in our commitment to working with governments, academia and relevant stakeholders in building healthcare capacity with a focus on non-communicable diseases in various countries in Asia-Pacific, Middle East, Africa and Latin America,” said Rasha Kelej, Chief Social Officer, Merck Healthcare.

About the Merck Capacity Advancement Program (CAP)

Merck CAP is a 5-year program aiming to expand the professional capacity in developing countries in the areas of research and development, advocacy building, supply-chain integrity and efficiency, pharmacovigilance, medical education, and community awareness.

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As part of the CAP, in 2015, more than 9,000 medical students in partnership with African universities such as University of Nairobi, Kenya; Makerere University, Uganda; Namibia University and University of Ghana, in addition to Asian universities such as Maharashtra

University, India and University of Indonesia benefited from European-accredited clinical chronic diseases management training, which is seeking to equip them with skills to better manage and prevent these diseases.

Merck is planning to target more than 25,000 students by the end of 2018 expanding to more African, Asian, Latin American and Middle Eastern countries with special focus on non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, cancer and fertility management. The program will also kick off initiatives on building research capacity and improving supply chain in order to improve patient safety in Africa.

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About Merck

Merck is a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science and performance materials. Around 50,000 employees work to further develop technologies that improve and enhance life – from biopharmaceutical therapies to treat cancer or multiple sclerosis, cutting-edge systems for scientific research and production, to liquid crystals for smartphones and LCD televisions. In 2015, Merck generated sales of € 12.85 billion in 66 countries.

Founded in 1668, Merck is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed corporate group. Merck, Darmstadt, Germany holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the company operates as EMD Serono, MilliporeSigma and EMD Performance Materials.